

Fast Facts: 2016 Legislative Session

Provide safe, appropriate facilities for young children to learn

Issue:

- Quality preschool and early childhood facilities help provide the building blocks children need so they can start school ready to learn.
- Demand is increasing as more families with low incomes are accessing these programs through the Minnesota Early Learning Scholarships Program and child care subsidies tied to high quality programs under Parent Aware.
- All-day kindergarten has displaced many early childhood facilties, further adding to the demand for additional early childhood space.

Proposal:

- The governor's capital budget recommends \$15 million in bond funds plus \$5 million in General Fund in fiscal year (FY) 2016 for statewide grants to help local entities renovate or construct new early learning facilities.
- Because funding needs to be consistent and sustainable to have an impact, the recommendation plans for additional funding of \$5 million in bonds funds in 2018 and 2020.
- The grant program requires a competitive request for proposals process.

Benefits:

- Families across Minnesota have access to early childhood programs in safe, high quality facilities.
- Children achieve better outcomes in early learning facilities so they are prepared for kindergarten.
- The General Fund appropriation will allow nonprofit organizations and tribal governments, which aren't directly eligible for bond funding, to apply for a grant. Bond funding is available to facilities owned by the state or a political subdivision, such as a school district or city.
- Jobs are created to improve facilities, and the growing demand for high quality early learning facilities is met.

Fiscal impact:

- FY 2016: \$15 million bond funds, \$5 million General Fund
- FY 2018: \$5 million bond funds
- FY 2020: \$5 million bond funds

Related information:

- Governor's bonding proposal on Minnesota Management & Budget website: http://mn.gov/mmb/budget/capital-budget/
- Minnesota Statute 256E.37 on early childhood learning facilities: https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=256E.37 (PDF)

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